

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-16 and 18-31 were pending in the application. Claims 9, 11, 21, and 26 have been amended. Claims 10 and 25 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 3-9, 11-16, 18-24 and 26-31 remain pending in the application.

35 U.S.C. § 112 Rejection:

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant submits that the amendment to claim 9 overcomes the § 112 rejection.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejection, Allowable Subject Matter, and Allowed Claims:

Claims 9, 14, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hagersten, U.S. Patent 5,873,117. Claims 10-13, 15, 22, and 25-31 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

While Applicant respectfully disagrees with Examiner's characterization of Hagersten, Applicant has nevertheless amended claim 9 to incorporate the limitations of claim 10 and has also amended claim 21 to incorporate the limitations of claim 25. Since these combinations were deemed allowable by the Examiner, Applicant submits that claims 9 and 21, along with their associated dependent claims, are in condition for allowance.

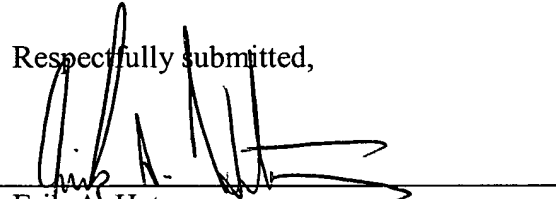
Claims 1, 3-8, 16, and 18-20 were allowed. Applicant appreciates Examiner's consideration of these claims.

CONCLUSION:

Applicant submits the application is in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is requested.

If any fees are due, the Commissioner is authorized to charge said fees to Meyertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert, & Goetzel Deposit Account No. 501505/5500-69700/BNK.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erik A. Heter', is written over a horizontal line.

Erik A. Heter

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